Breaking the Mold:
Identifying and Developing Top Talent using a New Officer Evaluation

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Abstract

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This monograph seeks to answer the primary research question of how can the Army improve its officer evaluation report in order to evaluate current doctrinal competencies, and better differentiate its top, middle, and bottom performers. The research applies evaluation theory to two case studies in order to determine best practices for a future Army evaluation. The cases involved are the Army's current officer evaluation system and the Marine Corps Fitness Report (FITREP). The monograph concludes with a recommendation for a framework of a future evaluation. The research found that the Army can improve its Officer Evaluation Report by incorporating the leader competencies of the Army's Leadership Requirements Model. Additionally, the Army should use behavior-anchored rating scales to rate performance and use a senior rater forced distribution system that evaluates leader competencies to differentiate between officers based on their performance and potential.

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I must thank my wonder wife Michelle and my daughter Olivia for all the sacrifices they have endured through the years of deployment, training, and tasks that seemed to constantly draw me away. You both help make me a better man and a better Soldier

Finally, I thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. His grace is enough to sustain us through any difficult situation.

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Introduction

In a 2011 address to U.S. Military Academy Cadets at West Point, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated that one of the biggest challenges in the Army is breaking the current way the Army assigns and promotes officers. He continued to frame the problem in terms of how the Army can identify and focus its efforts on those top and bottom 20 percent of performers. He asserted that the Army needs the former for retention and promotion, and the latter to transition out in a fair and respectful manner. Failure to do so "risks frustrating, demoralizing and ultimately losing the leaders we will most need for the future."[1]

Army Research Institute Surveys from 1998 and 2000 stated that almost all brigade and battalion commanders believe that the OER will be effective in managing senior rater profiles. Slightly more than half of these commanders believe that the OER will accurately rate officer performance, officer potential, or ensure the promotion of the best officers.[2] The surveys also found that only 30 percent of those commanders believe that the OER is effective in communicating what officers need to do to meet performance objectives or aids in leader development.[3] Wardynski, Lyle, and Colarusso, of the Army's Strategic Studies Institute, stated that retaining sufficient rather than optimal officers might have, "dire consequences for the Army's future."[4]

The Army's Evaluation Reporting System (ERS), which includes the Officer Evaluation Report (OER), "identifies Soldiers who are best qualified for promotion and assignments to positions of greater responsibility. The ERS also identifies Soldiers who will be kept on active

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[1] Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, "Speech to the Cadets at the United States Military Academy" (West Point, NY, Feb 25, 2011).

[2] Army Research Institute, "Survey Results and thier Impact on Personnel Matters," *ARI Newsletter*, 2002, 16.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Casey Wardynski, David S. Lyle and Michael J. Colarusso, *Towards A U.S. Army Officer Corps Strategy For Success: Retaining Talent*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2010), v.

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duty, be retained in grade, or eliminated from service."[5] Its primary function "is to provide

information to Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA) for use in making personnel

management decisions."[6] Its secondary function "is to encourage leader professional development

and enhance mission accomplishment."[7] Yet, some believe that it is not doing enough to facilitate

personnel management compared to contemporary approaches.

This research seeks to understand the problem posed by Secretary Gates and recommends

a new means to evaluate officers. The Army can improve its Officer Evaluation Report by

incorporating the leader competencies of the Army's Leadership Requirements Model (LRM),

using behavior-anchored rating scales to rate performance, and a senior rater forced distribution

system in order to evaluate leader competencies and differentiate between officer's based on their

performance and potential.

The evidence presented substantiates this idea through the study of performance appraisal

theory and two cases evaluation methods, which tests three hypotheses. The first hypothesis states

that if the Army rates leader competencies, then it can align the OER with current leadership

doctrine. The second hypothesis contends that if the Army uses Behavior-Anchored Rating Scales

(BARS) to rate the LRM competencies with the OER, then it can provide improved feedback to

officers regarding leader competencies. Third, if the Army uses a forced distribution system, then

it can clearly identify top, middle, and bottom performers.

The research focuses on answering the primary research question: how can the Army

improve its officer evaluation report in order to evaluate current doctrinal competencies, and

better differentiate its top, middle, and bottom performers? Three secondary research questions

help dissect the primary question and align it with the hypotheses of the study. First, why should

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[5] Department of the Army, *Evaluations Reporting System, AR 623-3,* (Washington, DC, AUG 2007), 3.

[6] Ibid., 5.

[7] Ibid.

the Army rate leader competencies? Second, how can the Army rate those competencies? Third, how can the Army better differentiate its top, middle, and bottom performers?

The current discourse from senior Department of Defense and Army leaders, to review and develop better methods of evaluation, highlights the significance this issue presents. General Dempsey, Chief of Staff of the Army, expressed a need for a new OER.[8] In fact, over the past few years, Dempsey directed various departments within the Army to research a new OER process. One of these initiatives includes the WholeOfficer Performance study conducted at the United States Military Academy.[9] Additionally, the Army conducted a webinar sponsored by General Chiarelli, the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, and the Strategic Studies Institute. This webinar focused on talent management, including a block on assessing talent.[10] In January 2011, the Army also announced that it would cut nearly 27,000 Soldiers and officers by 2015. This process could include early retirement boards for selected officers and foster more competitive selection boards.[11] This effort to revamp the evaluation process to accommodate future requirements demonstrates the relevance of this topic.

Several key assumptions help frame this study. First, inflated ratings occur in officer evaluations and are detrimental to the selection process and other administrative functions, in that it provides inaccurate information. Second, the Army will accept the practice of rating the leader competencies in the new leadership doctrine-based framework as the new standard for evaluation. Third, Army decision makers benefit from having access to more quantitative data about an

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[8] Prism, "An Interview with Martin E. Dempsey," *Prism* (National Defense University Press) 2, no. 1 (Jan 2010): 153. The Secretary of Defense nominated GEN Dempsey for the position of Chief of Staff of the Army in January 2011.

[9] MAJ Robert Dees, "WholeOfficer Performance," Technical Report, Systems Engineering, United Stated Military Academy (West Point, NY, 2010). GEN Dempsey did this while serving as the Commander of the Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC)

[10] Strategic Studies Institute United Stated Army War College, *Officer Strategy Home Page*, https://www.officer-strategy.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/ (accessed Jan 11, 2011).

[11] Jim Trice, *Army eyes fewer recruits, promotions*, (Army Times, Jan 23, 2011), http://www.armytimes.com/news/2011/01/army-eyes-fewer-recruits-012311w/(accessed Mar 14, 2011)

individual when making various personnel decisions. Finally, Army officers have an expectation to receive a fair and accurate assessment of their performance.

This monograph uses the following key terms:

Bullet Comments: "Short, concise, to-the-point comments starting with action words (verbs) or possessive pronoun (his/her). Bullet comments will not be longer than two lines, preferably one, and no more than one bullet to a line."[12]

Evaluation Reporting System (ERS): "the policies and tasks for the Army's Evaluation Reporting Systems. These include reporting systems for officers and non-commissioned officers and academic performance and potential. It includes policy statements, operating tasks, and rules in support of operating tasks."[13]

Forced Distribution: is a person to a fixed standard evaluation, is part of the organizations performance policy and procedures, and uses required or recommended guidance on rating distribution (curve).[14]

Forced Ranking: is a person-to-person evaluation, operates in addition to the organizations performance appraisal procedures, and is a relative comparison of personnel compared to others in the organization.[15]

Leadership Requirements Model (LRM): "the model's basic components center on what a leader is and what a leader does. The leader's character, presence, and intellect enable the leader to master the core leader competencies through dedicated lifelong learning." The Army's Leader Competencies are leads others, extends influence beyond the chain of command, leads by example, communicates, creates positive environment, prepares self, develops others, and gets results.[16]

Narrative Comments: also called essay comments "describing strong and weak aspects of the employee's behavior over time."[17]

Performance: "performance is evaluated by observing a rated individual's actions, demonstrated behaviors, and results from the point of view of the values and responsibilities."[18]

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[12] Department of the Army, *AR 623-3*, 103.

[13] Ibid., i.

[14] Dick Grote, *Forced Ranking* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press, 2005), 140.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Department of the Army, *FM 6-22*, 2-4.

[17] George T. Milkovich and John W. Boudreau, *Human Resource Management* (Burr Ridge, IL: Richard D. Irwin Inc., 1997).

[18] Department of the Army, *AR 623-3*, 104.

Potential: "judgments on the officer's ability to perform at higher grades, and they are also made to judge whether an officer should be retained and given greater responsibility in his or her present grade."[19]

The available data from the organizations involved in the case studies limits this monograph. To safeguard the integrity of their research, the Center for Army Leadership made limited information available, in a controlled manner, to assist in this research. Finally, the research is limited to publicly available information in all other aspects of data collection.

This research focuses on the OER and not the entire personnel management system. This monograph remains within the scope of the research questions and the methodology to evaluate case studies. Additionally, the research makes recommendations for evaluation techniques that might best serve the Army. It does not specify the exact criteria of measurement that the recommended techniques should use in the evaluation.

This monograph begins with a literature review in order to establish the fundamental theories and principles that influence this research. Following the literature review is an explanation of the methodology used to evaluate the case studies. The analysis section examines two cases and identifies the best practices when answering the research questions and testing the hypotheses. Finally, based on the evidence provided, the author makes recommendations to the Army, identifies additional topics for research, and provides a summary of the research conducted.

Literature Review

The literature review contains three sections that provide a foundation for the research. First, is a review of why organizations rate leader competencies. Second, is a review of how organizations rate competencies. Third, is a review of why organizations differentiate between employees. These reviews consist of theory, concepts derived from theory, and evidence of application. Finally, the review examines the recent history of the OER and other known

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[19] Department of the Army, *AR 623-3*, 104.

initiatives to revise it. The selections represent the pertinent literature used in framing this study and are not an exhaustive listing of material available.

Why do organizations rate leader competencies?

Organizational Competency Theories

Schein, a professor at the M.I.T. Sloan School of Management, theorized that embedded skills are those "special competencies displayed by group members in accomplishing certain tasks, the ability to make certain things that get passed on from generation to generation without necessarily being articulated in writing."[20] Schein suggested that an organization should construct reward and discipline systems that are consistent with the organization's way of thinking and working.[21] He added that, "As the organization matures and stabilizes…" the embedded skills, "become primary maintenance mechanisms what we ultimately call institutionalization."[22] Schein concluded that the quickest and easiest way to change some of these embedded skills is to change the reward and punishment systems within the organization.[23]

Milkovich and Boudreau, in their book *Human Resource Management, 7th Edition,* theorized that rated performance should be goal-related, observable, understandable, and controllable.[24] They suggested that if the goal of the organization is to focus on core competencies, then the organization should evaluate the performance of those competencies, and that the emphasis is on the observed outcomes and behaviors the employee exhibit. [25] Additionally, they suggested that both the employee and the rater must understand those rated

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[20] E.H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership (3rd ed.)* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 13.

[21] Ibid., 333.

[22] Ibid., 270-271.

[23] Ibid., 127.

[24] Milkovich and Boudreau, 169.

[25] Ibid., 170-171.

behaviors and expectations, with a focus on those behaviors that the employee can control.[26] Milkovich and Boudreau concluded that behaviors reflect a person's ability to perform and accomplish work requirements. Evaluating core competencies links desirable behaviors to organizational goals for employees.[27]

Army's Concept of Organizational Competencies

Horey led an Army Research Institute study to construct the LRM, and establish the foundations for using it as evaluation criteria.[28] His team used an iterative process that searched military, consulting, and general source databases. They screened over 100 documents and identified 35 that "identify potential leader or leadership requirements."[29] Next, the team developed a framework of eight leader competencies.[30] Horey, Fallesen, Morath, Cronin, Cassella, Franks, and Smith then surveyed twenty-two subject matter experts (SMEs) who provided feedback regarding the proposed leadership competency framework. The study asked each SME to evaluate the frameworks "adequacy and appropriateness of the proposed competencies, components, and sample actions, the relationship of the environmental factors to the competencies, and the best means for developing the competencies."[31] The team's research resulted in the Army's leader competencies of the LRM found in Army Field Manual 6-22, *Army Leadership*, which are 1) leads others, 2) extends influence beyond the chain of command, 3)

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[26] Milkovich and Boudreau, 170-171.

[27] Ibid., 165-171.

[28] Jeffrey Horey, Jon J. Fallesen, Ray Morath, Brian Cronin, Robert Cassella, Will Franks , Jr., and Jason Smith, *Competency Based Future Leadership Requirements*, Technical Report, Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (Department of the Army, 2004), viii and 62.

[29] Ibid., 26-27.

[30] Ibid., 39.

[31] Ibid. SMEs representing Army field grade officers, senior enlisted, and warrant officers, Air Force and Navy representatives, and academia and other behavioral science leadership experts. One was an Army civilian and member of the reserve forces. Four SMEs were retired active component officers. Five of the SMEs were civilian employees of the government. Four SMEs were from academia, and one was a foreign defense scientist.

leads by example, 4) communicates, 5) creates positive environment, 6) prepares self, 7) develops others, and 8) gets results.[32]

FM 6-22 states that the LRM's "basic components center on what a leader is and what a leader does."[33] Horey et al. stated that the competency-based framework provided by the LRM integrates the previous leadership framework found in FM 22-100, *Army Leadership,* in a clear way for leaders to understand.[34] FM 6-22 states that, "Competencies provide a clear and consistent way of conveying expectations for Army leaders," and FM 6-22, asserts that competencies are behaviors that are observable by various levels of leaders and followers. [35]

Application of the Army's Organizational Competencies

In 2007, Horey, Harvey, Curtin, Keller, Morath, Fallesen, and Halpin conducted an additional study that validated the use of the new leader competencies, in the LRM, for evaluating performance.[36] Horey et al. sampled 140 matched pairs of subordinate and supervisors in their study.[37] The subordinate and supervisor's military ranks ranged from Sergeant to Colonel, showing the versatility of the LRM across the leadership spectrum. The study concluded that the value of using a common model in evaluations, like the LRM, is the ability to measure a leader's performance and development over time in different leadership situations.[38]

There are several advantages for organizations to rate competencies. Schein asserted that it is a quick and easy way to change from one set of embedded skills to another.[39] Milkovich and Boudreau asserted that evaluating core competencies links desirable behaviors to organizational

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[32] Department of the Army, *Army Leadership, FM 6-22,* (Washington, DC, OCT 2006), 2-4.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Horey et al. (2004), 60.

[35] Department of the Army, *FM 6-22*, 2-7.

[36] Jefferey Horey, Jennifer Harvey, Pat Curtin, Heidi Keller-Glaze, Ray Morath and Jon Fallsen, "A criterion-Related Validation Study of the Army Core Leader Competency Model," Technical Report 1199, United States Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (2007), v.

[37] Horey, et al. (2007), 11-12.

[38] Ibid., 30.

[39] Schein, 127.

goals for employees.[40] Finally, Horey et al.'s two studies validated the concept of using the

Army's current leader competencies, found in the LRM, in performance assessments. These

conclusions suggest that organizations can use internally created competencies as rating criteria.

Rating these competencies may assist in institutionalizing what leaders need, and how to

encourage the best leader behaviors.

How can organizations rate competencies?

Performance Evaluation Theory

       Murphy and Cleveland, professors at Penn State Universities Department of Psychology,

theorized that appraisals are "a communication process in which the rater attempts to convey

information to the organization about a subordinate's performance." They based their model on

three assumptions of employee performance. First, rater behavior is goal directed. Second,

performance appraisals are a communication process between the rater and the ratee. Third,

performance appraisals serve as a tool for effective management and not a measurement

instrument. After addressing these assumptions, they described their model. [41]

       Murphy and Cleveland's model contains four elements – rater context, performance

judgment, the performance rating, and the evaluation of the appraisal system. Rater context refers

to the rater adapting to multiple, competing, and conflicting organizational forces when

conducting an evaluation.[42] Performance judgments are private evaluations conducted by the rater

as part of the evaluation process.[43] Organizations use performance ratings for within- and

between-individual comparisons, with between-individual comparisons becoming the rater's

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[40] Milkovich and Boudreau, 169. They define controllable as the ability of the ratee to change the behavior.

[41] Kevin Murphy and Jeanette Cleveland, *Understanding Performance Appraisals* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. , 1995). 2

[42] Ibid., 22.

[43] Ibid., 23.

prime focus.[44] Organizations evaluate their appraisals based on whether the information provided is useful in facilitating the purpose of the appraisal. If the appraisal is the catalyst for promotions, raters are likely to emphasize between-individual aspects over within-individual aspects of the evaluation.[45]

Murphy and Cleveland asserted that raters are not passive measurement instruments and that the rater is conscious about the rating errors they make.[46] The rater has some goal in mind when they begin to evaluate an individual. The ratings given represent the desires of the rater to achieve those goals based on the organizational context. Rater errors, such as leniency or "halo error," are common products of this goal behavior.[47] To overcome potential errors in ratings, organizations must conduct rater error training to achieve the organization's goals for the evaluation processes.[48] Murphy and Cleveland's theory inform the research that social and organizational contextual issues shape how the rater will rate an individual.

Leader Self-Development Theory

Reichard and Halverson-Johnson, in an article in *Leadership Quarterly*, asserted that "by creating an organizational strategy to support leader self-development, return on investment previously spent on managerial training can increase exponentially."[49] They argued that by teaching leaders how to self-develop, the leaders are able to continue to practice self-development throughout their careers.[50] They argued that organizations should base selection criteria on those

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[44] Murphy and Cleveland, 27.

[45] Ibid., 28.

[46] Ibid., 28.

[47] Ibid., 242. Halo error refers to rating all dimensions or traits the same based on one favored trait. Leniency error refers to the trend to rate a person higher than their actual performance.

[48] Murphy and Cleveland, 31.

[49] Rebecca J. Reichard and Stephanie Halverson-Johnson, *Leader Self-Development as Organizational Strategy* (Leadership Quarterly V22 No1, Feb 01, 2011), 24.

[50] Ibid., 24.

traits that increase the leader's propensity to become an effective self-developer.[51] They

recommend that organizations mandate training to improve self-development, reward behavior

that maximizes self-development behavior, and require leaders to engage subordinates about self-

development. [52]

Key Concepts in Rating Performance

The literature describes three key concepts for evaluating performance that are important

to this study. These concepts include the use of rating scales, structured essay comments, and

open-ended essay comments. Together these elements provide the means to construct a future

evaluation system.

Rating scales, to include Behavior Anchored Rating Scales (BARS), assess a person

according to a standard along a scale (e.g., ranging from unsatisfactory to outstanding).

Milkovich and Boudreau asserted that organizations should focus their appraisals on the skills,

abilities, needs, and traits thought to reflect behaviors that align to those competencies.[53] Rating

scales can consist of boxes to check or assigning numbers to indicate various levels of

performance among these competencies and behaviors. [54] Behavior anchored rating scales use

specific descriptions of behaviors, referred to as anchors, for each level of rating along the scale.

These anchors help reduce some errors found in rating scales. [55] Raters provide feedback as to an

employee's strengths and weaknesses by rating how well the employee meets evaluation

criteria.[56]

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[51] Reichard and Halverson-Johnson, 17.

[52] Ibid., 16-24.

[53] Milkovich and Boudreau, 170.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Milkovich and Boudreau, 175. Robert L. Mathis and John H. Jackson, Human Resource Management, 10th (Mason, OH: Thomson South-Western, 2003) provide additional information regarding the use of rating scales.

[56] Ibid., 174-175.

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Raters use essay comments to elaborate on ratings from rating scales based on structured guidelines in the organization's evaluation policy.[57] Stéphane Brutus, an Industrial-Organizational Psychology professor at Concordia University, asserted that essays "can be structured to encourage the evaluator to center exclusively on the most salient performance issues of the target or on specific performance dimensions." [58] Structured essay comments are more likely to provide a consistent means of evaluation across a disaggregated organization.[59]

Open-ended essay comments provide great flexibility to the rater when writing the evaluation and provide limited feedback.[60] Mathis and Jackson argued that the first limitation is that the quality of the feedback depends on the rater's ability to write. They contend that some raters have an ability to express themselves, while others do not. They suggested that poorly written appraisals result in inconsistent or even poor descriptions of employee performance. Mathis and Jackson concluded that raters "often combine the essay with other methods," in an effort to produce a complete picture of an employee's performance.[61]

Application of Rating Scales

Grussing, Valuck, and Williams asserted that there are relatively few differences in the accuracy of the rating provided by behavioral-anchored scales compared to traditional rating scales.[62] However, their team discovered there is a difference in how ratings scales provide feedback to the ratee. Specifically, they found that the use of behavioral-anchored scales led to an

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[57] Milkovich and Boudreau, 176.

[58] Stéphane Brutus, "Words versus numbers: A theoretical exploration of giving and receiving narrative comments in performance appraisal," Human Resource Management Review (Elsevier, 2009), 1-14.

[59] Stéphane Brutus and Magda Donia, *Improving the Effectiveness of Students in Groups with a Centralized Peer Evaluation System* (Concordia University, John Molson School of Business, 2009), 6.

[60] Robert L.Mathis and John H. Jackson, *Human Resource Management,* 10th Edition, (Mason, Ohio: Thomson South-Western, 2003), 355-356.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Paul G. Grussing, Robert J. Valuck and Reed G. Williams, "Development and Validation of Behaviorally-Anchored Rating Scales for Student Evaluation of Pharmacy Instruction," *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education* (American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy) 58, no1. Winter Suppliment (1994), 27.

increased development of positive attributes of performance. Their research suggested this is due to the descriptions of behaviors in the rating.[63] These descriptions led employees to abandon behaviors associated with low ratings. Thus, the conclusion of their research illustrates that a positive side effect to using behavior-anchored ratings scales is "their ability to provide highly-effective feedback."[64]

Horn, DeNisi, Kinicki, and Bannister, in their writings in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, asserted that, although the use of behavior-anchored rating scales does not produce more error-free ratings, they do provide more effective feedback than ratings that only use graphic rating scales.[65] They suggested that behavior-anchored rating scales provide feedback that is more effective when the rater was superior to the ratee and the organization uses the evaluation for administrative decisions.[66] Horn et al. concluded that feedback from BARS should include explicit behavior goals applied to the ratee's developmental action plans.[67]

Several additional Army Research Institute (ARI) studies also found benefits to using behavioral scales in evaluating performance. ARI contracted these studies to various research firms in support of requirements from the Army. Three studies used behavior scales in developing new measures of performance for soldiers. Borman, Horgen, and Birkeland, of the Personnel Studies Research Institute, developed a ten-point scale to rate various aspects of Army recruiter's performance.[68] Phillips, Shafer, Ross, Cox, and Shadrick, researchers at Klein Associates, developed a modified five-point behavior-anchored scale to align with the behaviors and their

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[63] Grussing et al., 33.

[64] Grussing et al., 34.

[65] Peter W. Horn, Angelo S. DeNisi, Angelo J. Kinicki and Brendan D. Bannister, "Effectiveness of Performance Feedback from Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales," *Journal of Applied Psychology* (The American Pychological Association, Inc) 67, no. 5 (1982), 568.

[66] Horn et al., 574.

[67] Ibid., 575.

[68] Walter C. Borman, Kristen E. Horgen, and Scott A. Birkeland, *Development of Recruiter Assessment Measures for the U.S. Army*, Research Note 2004-08, Personnel Decisions Research Institutes, Inc. (Arlington, VA: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 2004), C2-C9.

effects on job performance.[69] Both studies agreed that rating with behavior-anchored ratings scales provides better feedback and aids in ratee development.[70]

Mero and Motowidlo, in their article in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, asserted that requiring raters to justify ratings should cause the rater to consider the personal ramifications of the ratings they make.[71] They sampled 247 undergraduate students of business management in order to determine if accountability influenced accurate performance ratings.[72] Moro and Motowidlo concluded that when performance appraisal results drive personnel decisions, holding raters accountable for their ratings should improve rating accuracy to promote decision quality.[73]

The review of literature regarding rating competencies informs this research in many ways. Murphy and Cleveland asserted that evaluations are a communication process and that raters will focus on between person ratings if the rating facilitates personnel decisions.[74] Reichard and Halverson-Johnson suggested rating and rewarding self-development behavior as part of the evaluation process.[75] Grussing et al. and Horn et al. suggested that in superior to subordinate ratings, behavioral anchored scales provide more effective feedback than standard rating scales.[76] Additionally, Brutus encouraged the use of narrative comments to expand on ratings.[77] Finally,

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[69] Jennifer K. Phillips, Jennifer Shafer, Karol G. Ross, Donald A. Cox and Scott B. Shadrick, *Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales for the Assessment of Tactical Thinking Mental Models*, Research Report 1854, Klein Associates (Fort Knox, KY: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 2006), v.

[70] Human Resources Research Organization, 11. Borman et al., 5. Phillips et al., 23-24.

[71] Neal P. Mero and Stephan J. Motowidlo, "Effects of Rater Accountability on the Accuracy and the Favoraility of Performance Ratings," *Journal of Applied Psychology* (The American Pychological Association, Inc) 80, no. 4 (1995), 518.

[72] Ibid., 520.

[73] Moro et al., 523.

[74] Murphy et al., 28.

[75] Reichard et al., 16-24.

[76] Grussing et al., 34. Horn et al., 575.

[77] Brutus (2009), 11. Mathis and Jackson, 355-356

Moro and Motowidlo suggested including rater accountability in the rating process to improve rater accuracy.[78]

How can organizations differentiate employee's potential?

Employee Comparison Theory

Milkovich and Boudreau asserted that some organizational decisions require comparisons between employees based on limited opportunities for promotion and other incentives within the organization. Milkovich and Boudreau suggested that objective performance rating data could assist in distinguishing between employees. They concluded that many organizations use one of two ranking techniques to compare employees, ranking schemes and forced distribution guidelines, in determining extraordinarily good or poor performers.[79]

Concepts for between-employee comparisons

Milkovich and Boudreau asserted that first-to-last ranking schemes are simple, quickly calculated, and easy to understand. However, this style of ranking is difficult to apply to large pools of employees and provides no means to distinguish levels of performance between the people ranked.[80] Grote suggested that forced ranking schemes can identify the top, middle, and bottom performers. These rankings determine the priority for who receives rewards, increased compensation, and promotion.[81] The advantage to such a system is that a majority of the employees (i.e., 90 percent) remain in good standing with the organization. However, those in the bottom 10 percent risk feeling devalued and demoralized when faced with possible termination.

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[78] Moro et al., 518.

[79] Milkovich and Boudreau, 177-179.

[80] Mathis and Jackson, 354.

[81] Grote, 64-65. Casey Wardynski, David S. Lyle, and Michael J. Colarusso, *Towards a U.S. Army Officer Corps Strategy for Success: Developing Talent,* Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2010), also describes a tri-modal ranking scheme similar to the vitality curve.

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Some users of vitality curve ranking schemes provide opportunities for the bottom 10 percent to demonstrate improvement before termination.[82]

Grote suggested that forced distribution guidelines provide a flexible means to rank or compare employees. [83] Forced distribution guidelines establish a maximum percentage for the top ranking and a minimum percentage for the lowest ranking. In between are percentage guidelines, at each rating level, for raters to use.[84] When using this method, raters must identify top and bottom performers while including a flexible breakout of middle performers.

Application of between-employee comparisons

A 2006 *Bloomberg Businessweek* report estimate that nearly one-third of U.S. corporations use a forced distribution or forced ranking system to compare between-employees.[85] However, the research found relatively few studies that compare the effectiveness of these systems to other systems not using fixed percentages. Scullen and Lacher asserted that organizations can see a diminishing return in performance, over time, using forced distribution ratings when compared to a non-forced system.[86] Berger, Harbring, and Sliwka concluded that employees rated using forced distribution performed better and raters differentiated more than their peers who were not using fixed percentage distribution.[87] Greenwald reported that forced distribution has some legal drawbacks when used incorrectly to discriminate and remove certain

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[82] Grote, 63-65.

[83] Ibid., 139-149.

[84] Grote, 139-149.

[85] Bloomberg Businessweek, "The Struggle To Measure Performance," *Bloomberg Businessweek*, 01 09, 2006, http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/06_02/b3966060.htm (accessed Apr 09, 2011).

[86] Steve Scullen and Lisa Lacher, ""Rank and Yank" Systems Could Improve Organizational Performance," *Drake University News Release*, 03 05, 2005, http://www.drake.edu/newsevents/releases/mar05/030205scullen html (accessed Apr 09, 2011).

[87] Johannes Berger, Christine Harbring and Dick Sliwka, *Performance Appraisals and the Impact of Forced Distribution: An Experimental Investigation*, Discussion Paper No. 5020, The Institute for the Study of Labor (Bonn, GE: IZA, 2010), 30-31.

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segments of employees.[88] The research on the effectiveness of forced distribution indicates its potential to increase employee performance and rater differentiation when implemented properly.

Milkovich and Boudreau informed the literature that some decisions in an organization require comparisons between employees.[89] They describe forced ranking and forced distribution as commonly used approaches that organizations use to make these comparisons.[90] Grote described a more flexible forced distribution guideline that provides more flexibility in the rating scheme.[91] Finally, Scullen and Lacher, as well as Berger et al., found that forced distribution ranking systems can assist in improving employee performance, even if for only a short time.[92]

History of the OER 1973-present.

Jan Swicord, Chief of Evaluations Branch at the Army's Human resources Command, stated that "the Army replaced all previous officer evaluations due to human nature's desire to give your subordinate one better than the guy next door."[93] Introduced in 1973, DA Form 67-7 *Army Officer Evaluations* included several numbered rating scales that the rater used to compile an overall score for the evaluation. Introduced in 1979, DA Form 67-8 *Army Officer Evaluations* was the first OER designed to specifically address the new central selection boards and remained active for 18 years, longer than any other OER since World War II.[94]

The Army released the next version of the OER in 1998 with DA Form 67-9. The new OER provided the rater and senior rater with clearer instructions regarding comments made in the

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[88] John Greenwald, "Rank and Fire," *Time*, 06 11, 2001, http://www.time.com/time/business/article/0,8599,129988,00 html (accessed Apr 09, 2001).

[89] Milkovich and Boudreau, 177.

[90] Milkovich and Boudreau, 177.

[91] Grote, 139-149.

[92] Scullen et al. Berger et al. 30-31.

[93] Jan Swicord, interview by Author, *Chief Evaluations Branch USA HRC*, (Sep 17, 2010).

[94] Kite, 13.

narrative sections.[95] Additionally, it eliminated the previous senior rater's forced distribution with a flexible forced distribution guideline that limits the top rating to 49 percent or less.[96] In 2004, the Army eliminated the senior rater rating for company grade officers and junior warrant officers. The Army's intent for this was to allow leaders to focus on developing these junior officers.[97] The Army uses this evaluation system today and it is the subject of further review in the case study analysis.

Summary

The research provides a review of the literature that influence this study. In particular, there were four critical aspects of performance appraisals that emerged from the literature. The first is that performance appraisals serve to inform personnel management decisions.[98] The second is that the elements of the evaluation need to align with organizational values or competencies.[99] Third is that rating scales provide different levels of feedback to the organization and the ratee.[100] Finally, forced distribution can be a positive tool when differentiating between employees.[101] These elements provide the criteria necessary to assess the case studies.

The literature review contains three sections that provide a foundation for the research. The first was a review of why organizations rate leader competencies. The second was a review of how can organizations rate competencies. The third was a review of why organizations differentiate employee potential. These reviews consist of a review of theory, concepts derived from theory, and evidence of their application. Finally, the review highlights the recent history of

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[95] Department of the Army, *Officer Evaluation Reporting System, AR 623-105,* (Washington, D.C., 1998), Summary of Changes Section.

[96] Ibid., 19

[97] Department of the Army, *AR 623-105,* Summary of Changes section.

[98] Department of the Army, *AR 623-3*, 4.

[99] Welch, GE Letter to Share Owner, Schein, 13,

[100] Milkovich and Boudreau, 166. Reichard et al., 16-24.

[101] Milkovich and Boudreau, 185.

the OER and other known initiatives to revise it. The selections represent the pertinent literature used in framing this study and are not an exhaustive listing of material available.

Methodology

This section describes the methodology used to evaluate the case studies, as a structure focused comparison.[102] The emerging aspects of the research organize this section into four parts: selection of significant cases, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis. This section establishes the criterion used to evaluate each case equally and test the hypotheses of the research.

Selection of Significant Cases

A comparative assessment of the two evaluations identifies the nuances that inform best practices in performance evaluations. First, this study focuses on the Army's OER and subsequently provides a base of information to shape the research. Second, this study examines the Marine Corp's Fitness Report (FITREP). These cases provide greater insight into how two military organizations use evaluations as well as the various techniques and cultural dynamics that make the evaluation process effective.

When considering the current Army OER, it is significant to understand how raters currently rate Army officers. This study applies the same criteria and approach to examine the Army's OER, in order to equally evaluate and determine the strengths and weakness and compare it to those of the Marine Corps FITREP and the literature. Next, is an examination of the Marine Corps FITREP.

The Marine Corps FITREP serves the purposes of this study in several respects. First, the Marine Corps is a sister military service and must abide by the same laws for promotion and retention as the Army. Second, the Marine Corps uses a very different means to evaluate their

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[102] Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Study and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge , MA: MIT Press, 2005), 67-124.

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leaders than the current Army OER. Finally, the WholeOfficer Performance study used the Marine Corps FITREP as a model, and did so based on guidance from General Dempsey.[103]

Together these two cases inform the research in three ways. It identifies 1) whether or not the organizations align their evaluations with their defined leadership traits or competencies; 2) the methods used by the organization to rate those competencies; and 3) the means the organization uses to differentiate employees. Together these best practices can assist in shaping a future Army evaluation report.

Instrumentation

The study asks a series of three questions in order to evaluate each case equally. The first question inquires if the cases rate its current leader competencies. This question seeks to validate the requirement to rate these competencies by demonstrating their benefit to other organizations. Evaluations should align the evaluated competencies with doctrine, and define the strong and weak behaviors associated with those competencies.

The second question put forth by the study examines how each case rates competencies. This question seeks to identify the potential effects of the rating method on the rater and the ratee. Evaluations should rate using behavior-anchored rating scales, require justification and accountability of ratings, identify strength and weakness in performance, and reward improvement.

The third question examines whether the cases uses a force distribution systems to differentiate ratees. This criterion identifies how the case draws comparisons between employees. Evaluations should use a behavior-anchored rating scale to rate performance and potential, distinguish at least three levels of performance and potential, and require justification and accountability of ratings made by the rater.

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[103] Dees, "WholeOfficer Performance", 1.

Data Collection

The data collected for this analysis came from a collection of policy documents, organizational surveys, journal articles, books, military service theses and monographs, general web searches, correspondence with the Army's Human Resources Command (HRC), and oral history interviews. The research considered policy documents, annual reports, and material receiving peer review before publishing as most valid. Military service theses and monographs provide sound insight into the topic but are not subject to the same peer review process. In addition, general web searches identified source material used in other research to verify content and context of the assertions. Oral history interviews provide insight not available from other sources, and are the opinion of the interviewee unless corroborated by other sources.

The data collected supports this research in the following ways. Policy describes the actual procedures that are in place in each organization. Surveys provide perceptions that shape the context of the organization. Books describe how the organization works from an independent perspective. Textbooks provide theory and key concept information that influences current instruction on the topic of leader evaluations. Service studies, including theses and monographs, are secondary sources that provide additional analysis from the perspective of the researcher. Documents and correspondence from HRC provide insight and information not publicly available, such as sensitive selection board results and trends.

The study found a lack of publically available data regarding the Marine Corps FITREP. This gap led to several oral history interviews of current Marines at the Command and General Staff College (CGSC), Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The interviewees are all current instructors or students at CGSC. They included a retired Marine who served 30 years in Marine Corps; the current, Colonel, commander of the Marine Corps Detachment at Fort Leavenworth; two Lieutenant Colonel instructors at CGSC; and two Major's who attend CGSC. The interviews centered around three questions. First, how well does the rater understand the rated traits in the

FITREP? Second, how well does the FITREP aid raters when evaluating those traits? Third, how well does the FITREP results aid in differentiation of ratees? The answers represent the opinions of these six officers and serve to demonstrate their perception of the FITREP.

George Piccirilli, Chief of Evaluation, Selection, and Promotion Division of Human Resources Command, agreed to contribute information to this study. Piccirilli began working at HRC when it introduced the current OER in 1998. The interview centered on confirming assertions he made in an article in 2002. Additionally, the interview explored current initiatives' at HRC regarding the OER and the feedback he receives from selection boards and other HRC requirements managers. [104]

Data Analysis

This study uses three criteria to analyze each case and test the hypotheses. First, if the case's personnel evaluation rates its current doctrinal competencies, then its practice supports hypothesis one. Second, if the case's personnel evaluation uses behavior-anchored rating scales to evaluate competencies, then its practices support hypothesis two. Finally, if the case's personnel evaluation uses a tri-modal or larger forced distribution system, then its practices support the third hypothesis.

The analysis of each case begins by examining how its personnel evaluation aligns with their current doctrine. Each case must rate its most current prescribed leader traits or competencies in the evaluation. Additionally, each case must identify the strong and weak behaviors related to those competencies in its doctrine or evaluation without making the report disparaging. Each case receives two points if it meets the criterion, one point if it meets only one

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[104] Joe Burlas, *Army Refines OER System*, Aug 23, 2002, http:www mccoy.army.mil/vtriad_online/08232002/OER system html (accessed Apr 09, 2011). George Piccirilli, interview by Author, *Chief of Evaluaitons, Selections, and Policy; Human Resources Command* , (Apr 12, 2011).

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portion of the criteria, and zero if the criteria is not in the cases policies or evaluation. Next, the analysis evaluates how each case rates these competencies.

The second criterion analyzes how each case rates competencies in the evaluation. Each case must use a rating scale to rate competencies. Each case receives two points for using a behavior-anchored rating scale, one point for using a numeric or graphic rating scale, and zero points for not using a rating scale. Each case's personnel evaluation must require the rater to justify ratings and hold the rater accountable for the rating. Finally, the case's personnel evaluation must identify strengths and weaknesses in every evaluated criteria and reward improvement in those criteria. For the second and third evaluated criteria, the case receives two points for meeting the criteria, one point if only part of the evaluation meets the criteria, and zero points if the criteria is not in the case's policy or evaluation. Next, the analysis evaluates if the case uses a forced distribution system.

The final criterion analyzes how the case differentiates amongst employees. This portion of each case study focuses on the evaluation made by the senior raters.[105] Each case must use a comparative method to distinguish between the performance and potential of the ratee. Each case receives two points if the evaluation uses descriptions (similar to behavior-anchored rating scales) at each level of the ratings and one point for using a numeric or graphic scale. The case allows for a distinction of the top, middle, and bottom performers without making the report adverse. The case receives two points for having more than three levels of differentiation and one point for three or less. The evaluation must require the rater to justify ratings and hold the rater accountable for the rating. The case receives one point for written justification and one point for other accountability measures.

Analysis

The analysis portion of this study uses the methodology above to evaluate each case,

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[105] A senior rater is the supervisor of the person conducting the rating. The assumption is that the senior rater has more experience in evaluating and predicting potential.

answer the research questions, and provide evidence to support the hypotheses. The first case analyzes the Army's OER as a tool to record performance and potential of each Army officer. The Marine Corps FITREP provides the second case, as an alternate performance evaluation used within the military. The analysis concludes with a cross case analysis that compares the case results to the hypotheses.

The Army Officer Evaluation Report

The perception among the Army officer corps is that the Army's OER is not the best system for evaluating performance. Three separate Army studies point to officer dissatisfaction with the current OER. Surveys conducted in 2000 and 2009 suggest that there is a lack of trust in the evaluation system.[106] Additionally, a recent Army Strategic Studies Institute monograph stated that over 70 percent of Army officers believe that the OER is only moderately useful at identifying the highest potential officers.[107] This case study identifies how the Army evaluates its officers in order to compare it to the findings in the literature and the Marine Corps' FITREP.

Does the Army rate their current leader competencies?

Part IV of the OER titled "Performance Evaluation – Professionalism" is a section in which the rater evaluates the 26 different officer values, attributes, skills, and actions.[108] These values, attributes, skills, and actions are not the leader competencies found in the Army's new leadership doctrine.[109] The Army wrote the current OER in 1998, changed its leader

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[106] Army Training and Leader Development Panel, *Report to the Army 2000*, (Accessed at http://www.army mil/features/ATLD/report.pdf on Nov 15, 2010), The Army Research Institute in conjunction with the Center for Army Leadership conducts the Qualitative Leader Development Survey annually via official email. Request for further information regarding the survey and its content must go through the Center for Army Leadership, FT Leavenworth, KS.

[107] Casey Wardynski, David S. Lyle and Michael J. Colarusso, *Towards a U.S. Army Officer Strategy for Success: Evaluating Talent,* Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2010), 6.

[108] Department of the Army, *Evaluation Reporting System, DA PAM 623-3* (Washington, D.C.: Army Publishing Directorate, 2007), 18-19.

[109] Department of the Army, *FM 6-22*, 2-4.

competencies in 2006, and has chosen not to update the evaluation to reflect doctrinal changes. [110]

Therefore, the Army receives zero points for this criterion.

Army regulation (AR) 623-105, *Officer Evaluation Reporting System,* and FM 22-100, *Army Leadership,* describe the values, attributes, skills, and actions in broad terms. [111] Although they describe what type of behavior the officer should possess, they do not describe what defines exceptionally strong or weak behavior. Either the rated officer possesses the trait or they do not. The rating in the OER form assists in the identification of strengths but not weaknesses. [112] Department of the Army Pamphlet (DA PAM) 623-3, *Evaluation Reporting System*, recommends providing additional comments in the written portion of the OER to expand on rater identified strengths. [113] If the rater identifies one of these traits as a weakness, this negative information automatically makes the report derogatory and the rater must write supporting comments. [114] The ability to identify strengths, but not weaknesses without making the report derogatory earns the Army one point.

The Army's current officer evaluation does not rate the current competencies that found in its leadership doctrine and validated as suitable criteria for performance evaluation. [115] The analysis found that the previous values, attributes, skills, and actions were ill defined and lacked the ability to differentiate levels of performance. [116] However, the current OER require raters to identify strengths amongst the listed traits. [117] The Army scored one point out of four in this

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[110] Department of the Army, *Officer Evaluation Reporting System, AR 623-105,* (Washington, D.C., 1998). Department of the Army, *FM 6-22,* (2006).

[111] Department of the Army, *AR 623-105,*(1998), 17, Department of the Army, *FM 22-100, Army Leadership* (Washington, D.C., 1999), 2-1 through 2-28. These are the policy and doctrinal publications that governed the OER during its creation.

[112] Department of the Army, *DA PAM 623-3*, 18. See a copy of the OER in Appendix 1. DA PAM 623-3 is one of two policy documents that governs the current OER.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Department of the Army, *AR 623-3,* 32. Department of the Army, *DA PAM 623-3*, 18

[115] Horey et al. (2007), 29.

[116] Horey et al. (2004), 60.

[117] Department of the Army, *DA PAM 623-3,*18-19.

criterion. This relates to hypothesis one by identifying that the Army is not rating those competencies that they feel officers must exhibit and that it lists in the current doctrine.

How does the Army rate its competencies?

For the purposes of this research, the analysis focuses on the traits listed in Part IV of the current OER. It is important to note that this portion of the analysis focuses on the rater and not the senior rater. The analysis of the senior raters portion of the OER is part of the differentiation section of the case studies.

The rater marks a box as yes or no for each criterion. A no mark requires written justification in the narrative section of the OER. Next, the rater marks one of the three attributes, two of the four skills, and three of the twelve actions that best describe the strengths of the officer.[118] The rating does not rate competencies using a behavior-anchored scale or a numeric scale as described in the literature.[119] Therefore, it receives no points for using a rating scale to measure organizationally defined leader competencies.

The Army requires written comments regarding officer performance in Part Vb "Performance Narrative."[120] The Army recommends that these comments include justification of the identified strengths in Part IV. However, the rater must write comments to justify a "No" mark in Part IV, as this makes the entire report an adverse evaluation.[121] The research found that the Army does not have an explicit policy to rate officers regarding how well they rate subordinates. Piccirilli states that justifying high and low markings, along with accountability for rater ratings, are considerations for the next OER.[122] The Army receives one point for requiring justification of negative ratings and zero points for not holding the rater accountable for other aspects of rating subordinates.

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[118] Department of the Army, *DA PAM 623-3,* 18-19.

[119] Milkovich and Boudreau, 175.

[120] Ibid., 20.

[121] Ibid., 18.

[122] Piccirilli, Apr 12, 2011.

As previously described, the current OER does not show the officer at what level they exhibit various doctrinal competencies. The previous analysis identified the ability of the rater to identify a limited amount of strengths. [123] If the officer improves in a competency not previously marked as a strength, the rater must decide which previous strength to remove. This is the only way the rater can reward the officer for developing a new strength. This, and the inability of the rater to identify at what level the officer performs each trait, limits the ability of the OER to communicate feedback on strengths and weaknesses that can facilitate further development. The Army receives one point for determining strengths at some levels but not at all levels.

The current OER limits the ability of the rater to evaluate the level at which officers exhibit desired competencies. The Army does not rate officers using any form of behavioral-anchored or numeric rating scale as described in the literature.[124] The rater is not required to justify comments nor are they explicitly accountable for ratings as recommend in the literature.[125] Finally, the OER is limited in its ability to identify weaknesses and reward development of strengths and weakness as recommended in the literature.[126] The Army received two out of six points for evaluating leader competencies. This relates to hypothesis two by identifying that the Army is missing an opportunity to rate and provide feedback as to the level officers exhibit the competencies listed in the LRM.

How does the Army differentiate its officers?

The senior rater makes a comparative assessment of their officers in the same grade. DA PAM 623-3 asserts that, "The intent is for the senior rater to use these boxes to identify their upper third in each grade."[127] However the cap for Above Center Of Mass (ACOM) ratings is 49 percent and there is not a cap for Center Of Mass (COM) or Below Center of Mass-Retain

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[123] Department of the Army, *DA PAM 623-3,*18-19.

[124] Milkovich and Boudreau, 170.

[125] Moro et al., 518.

[126] Horn et al., 586.

[127] Department of the Army, *DA PAM 623-3*, 21.

(BCOM) ratings.[128] AR 623-3 describes what constitutes ACOM, COM, and BCOM.[129] The Army receives two points for using both a scale and descriptors to help the senior rater determine where to place their officers in the rating scheme. Piccirilli stated that forty percent of officer files contain more than one ACOM report. He also stated that only fifteen to twenty percent of files consist of majority ACOM reports. He argued that selection board results and requirements managers have little issue identifying the top and bottom 25% of officers based on the OERs in their file.[130]

The above rating scheme is a partial forced distribution of officers since only one criterion has a fixed percentage limit. Grote described this as a forced distribution guideline.[131] It also represents a scale of three levels without making the report adverse.[132] This allows for a potential breakout of the top, middle, and bottom performers. However, the Army policy limits ACOM ratings to 49 percent of officers and there is not a cap on COM ratings, the potential exists for it to be a bi-modal rating scheme.[133] Only a study of OERs written under this scheme could determine if this is actually happening or represents an issue for the Army. Therefore, the Army receives one point for having a scale of three or less.

The senior rater provides narrative comments regarding officer potential by responding to general prompts designed to focus comments.[134] HRC asserts that the current OER allows selection boards to identify officers for promotion. However, they identify that the Army needs to have more distinct and concise discipline in senior rater narratives, especially for junior officer

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[128] Ibid.

[129] Department of the Army, *AR 623-3,* 25.

[130] Piccirilli, Apr 12, 2011.

[131] Grote, 139-149.

[132] Department of the Army, *AR 623-3,* 25.

[133] Berger et al., 11.

[134] Department of the Army, *AR 623-3,* 20 and 22.

evaluations.[135] This comment came six years after the Army stopped rating junior officers in the ACOM, COM, and BCOM blocks in 2004. This is the first indication that there is an issue with a lack of block checking for junior officers, and that comments sections alone are insufficient for differentiation.

Piccirilli argued that senior rater comments hold a lot of weight in selection boards, by providing clarity to the rating.[136] Piccirilli's comments and the evidence above add emphasis to the use of a narrative section in justifying senior rater ratings.[137] However, DA PAM 623-3 prohibits direct references to the block check in the senior rater narrative. Instead, the senior raters can comment on other aspects of potential that can support the blocks checked.[138] This evidence indicates that senior rater's block check and narrative section are both useful in making personnel decisions for the Army, due the amount of information they provide about the ratee.

Finally, the Army has a mechanism to prevent senior raters from exceeding the 49 percent limit for the ACOM marking. If the senior rater exceeds his allocation of ACOM blocks, the Army automatically labels that report as COM.[139] Additionally, the Army maintains a profile of the senior rater's timeliness in submitting reports.[140] The Army receives one point for its use of narrative comments to expand upon, and thus justify, ratings. It also receives one point for senior rater accountability.

The Army receives five out of six points in differentiating between officers in the senior rater ratings. The Army uses a scale with descriptions of how to rate each officer along that scale

[135] Human Resources Command Evaluaiton Branch, "Military Evaluation (OER & NCOER) Information," *Human Resources Command*, November 17, 2010, https://www.hrc.army mil/site/Active/TAGD/ESPD(formerly_MSD)/ESO/ESO.htm (accessed 02 20, 2011), 21-24.

[136] Piccirilli, Apr 12, 2011.

[137] Williams, [first name not given], Chief of Command and Tactics Division, Military Police Captains Career Course, AUG 2005, www.armytoolbag.com/Tools/MPCCC/OER.ppt (accessed Apr 09, 2011), slide 49 and 50..

[138] Department of the Army, *DA PAM 623-3,* 22.

[139] Department of the Army, *AR 623-3,* 26-27.

[140] Department of the Army, *DA PAM 623-3,* 25-26.

similar to behavior-anchored rating scales found in the literature.[141] The Army uses a tri-modal forced distribution guideline to differentiate officers, although it is not exactly as described in the literature.[142] Finally, the Army encourages justification for ratings and holds senior raters accountable for profile management and timely submission.

The research found little evidence to support that the Army has an issue with the manner that senior raters differentiate or provide information to support administrative decisions.[143] The aforementioned WholeOfficer Performance study remains the lone exception, and recommends a version similar to the current Marine Corps FITREP.[144] This analysis relates to hypothesis three by identifying that the Army can identify three levels of performers but that their current system is not a complete forced distribution and potentially is a bi-modal distribution.

An analysis of the Army's Officer Evaluation Report found that the Army could improve the way it rates competencies. First, the analysis found that the Army does not evaluate the current Army leader competencies found in the LRM.[145] Second, the analysis found that the Army does not rate it current leader competencies using any form of ratings scales. This limits the OER's use as a tool to provide feedback on leader competencies or reward development of those competencies. Additionally, the Army OER does not include a mechanism to hold raters accountable for the way they rate subordinates. Finally, the Army does not have an issue differentiating between officers using the senior raters rating on potential, senior rater narrative comments, and enforcing ratings standards and accountability. In summary, the research found that the Army has some room for improvement in evaluating competencies and performance, but is doing well at differentiating between three levels of performers in the officer corps.

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[141] Milkovich and Boudreau, 170.

[142] Grote, 139-149.

[143] A search of Army funded studies through the Army Research Institutes Publication Library found no publicly released studies on improving the senior rater's rating scheme. This library is found at http://www.hqda.army.mil/ari/library/publications.shtml

[144] Dees, (2010), 10.

[145] Department of the Army, *FM 6-22*, 2-4.

The Marine Corps Fitness Report

In contrast to the Army's Officer Evaluation Report is the Marine Corps' FITREP.[146] In 2004, the Department of the Navy concluded a command climate study, which included questions regarding the new FITREP. The study found close to a 20 percent increase in perceived fairness of the new FITREP over the previous FITREP.[147] All Marines, commissioned and non-commissioned, receive the same standardized fitness, or evaluation report. The Marine Corps Order (MCO) P1610.7F W/CH 1, dated May 2006, establishes the policy for the FITREP.[148] This order is the most current policy document describing Marine Corps competencies found during the research.

Does the Marine Corps rate their current competencies?

The rater's section is by far more extensive of the two evaluations in the case study. The rater, in parts D through H, rates 14 different criteria. The evaluation form describes satisfactory, good, and exceptional behaviors that associate with each of the fourteen competency.[149] This system allows Marines to see where they are weakest and where they are strongest in each competency. Mike Weaver, a retired Marine now teaching at the Army's CGSC, stated that the new FITREP, "defines the leader trait in the evaluation, making it easier to evaluate those traits."[150]

The Marine Corps receives two points for using their current competencies in their evaluation. Additionally, the Marine Corps receives two points for describing strong and weak behaviors associated with each competency. This relates to hypothesis one by identifying that the

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[146] A copy of the FITREP is in Appendix B.

[147] Navy Personnel Research, Studies, and Technologies Division; Bureau of Naval Personnel, *Results of the 2004 Marine Corps Command Climate Survey: Management Report* (Millington, TN, 2006), 74-76

[148] Department of the Navy, *Marine Corps Order P1610.7F W/CH 1* (Washington, D.C., 2006).

[149] See Appendix 2 for a description of each competency.

[150] Michael Weaver, interview by Author, *Instructor, Army Command and General Staff College,* (DEC 2010). Michael Weaver served in the Marine Corps from 1974 to 2004 and reamins active with the Marine Corps Detachment as a mentor to Marines at CGSC.

Marine Corps FITREP can help maximize the opportunity to evaluate its core leader competencies since they align with the current leadership doctrine.

How does the Marine Corps Rate their Competencies?

The Marine Corps uses what they term as performance-anchored rating scales to rate the Marine leaders.[151] These performance-anchored scales are essentially behavior-anchored scales. The MCO describes the Marine Corps leader competencies as the areas for evaluation that it deems most important.[152] Each competency includes three descriptions of behaviors associated with that competency. The rater must select the statement that best describes the ratee's behavior and at what level they performed that behavior. [153] The Marine Corps receives two points for using a behavior-anchored rating scale to rate leader competencies.

The Marine Corps policy requires the rater to justify exceptionally high or adverse ratings.[154] The policy forbids any attempt to justify other marks in the rating. The final performance assessment rates the Marine's role in the evaluation process.[155] This is a unique feature of the FITREP that is not found in the Army's OER. This specific rating seeks to hold the Marine accountable for how they rate other Marines.[156] The requirement to justify exceptionally high and adverse ratings receives one point. The explicit ability to hold Marines accountable for their role in the rating process receives one point.

The use of a behavior-anchored rating scale, with descriptions of various levels of behavior, allows raters and ratees the ability to identify strengths and weakness in performance. The descriptors, found on the evaluation form, explain what performance behaviors the Marine must exhibit in order to recieve a higher mark. Raters have an ability along that scale to reward

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[151] Department of the Navy, *Marine Corps Order P1610.7F W/CH 1,* 4-22.

[152] Ibid.

[153] Department of the Navy, *Marine Corps Order P1610.7F W/CH 1*, 4-23.

[154] Ibid. The Marine Corps considers grades "F" and "G" exceptionally high, and an "A" grade adverse.

[155] Ibid., 4-38.

[156] Ibid.

improvement in competency development without affecting other ratings.[157] The Marine Corps

receives two points for identifying strengths and weaknesses along with the ability to reward

improvement in leader development.

The Marine Corps FITREP receives six out of six for rating leader competencies. The

Marine Corps FITREP uses a behavior-anchored rating scale to rate current leader competencies

as described in the literature.[158] The Marine Corps' policy requires justification for ratings and

holds the rater accountable for the ratings they make as described in the literature.[159] Finally, the

FITREP can help raters and ratees identify strengths and weaknesses as well as reward

improvement with higher ratings as recommended in the literature.[160] This analysis relates to

hypothesis two by identifying that the Marine Corps can rate and communicate feedback to each

Marine regarding the level of their performance and the behaviors needed to improve.

An additional aspect of the rater's portion of the Marine Corps FITREP is its ability to

evaluate among Marines. Scores from each competency's letter ratings have a corresponding

number. The Marine Corps' personnel management database totals the numeric score of the rated

competencies and develops an average of the ratings. This database compares the average score

to the rater's profile and determines the reports relative value compared to all other reports in the

profile. One Marine Corps selection board reported that the relative value was a key consideration

in determining top, middle, and bottom performers.[161] COL McCoy, commander of the Marine

Corps Detachment at FT Leavenworth, stated that the relative value, "offers a math solution to

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[157] Department of the Navy, *Marine Corps Order P1610.7F W/CH 1*, 4-22 through 4-41

[158] Milkovich and Boudreau, 170.

[159] Moro et al., 518.

[160] Horn et al., 586.

[161] Michael Lindemann, "ILS 08-09 Board Observations," 2008, www.quantico-nnoa.org/Files/PME/ILS_08-09_Observations.PPT (accessed Dec 9, 2010), 10.

identify how the rater perceived the Marines overall performance."[162] Future research should consider the addition of relative value measurements in a future OER.

How does the Marine Corps differentiate?

The senior rater in the Marine Corps uses an eight level rating scale to rate individual potential against those Marines they observe at the same rank, and is not a forced distribution scheme.[163] The evaluation includes descriptions at various levels along the rating scale that describe what behavior warrants a particular rating.[164] The Marine Corps receives two points for the use of defined behaviors at various levels of the rating scale.

Members of a recent Marine Corps Intermediate Level School Board stated that many of the Marine Corps' senior raters tend to separate their officers into upper, middle, and lower thirds.[165] This requirement is not explicit in the policy governing Marine Corps FITREP, but is indicative of less lenient raters using unstructured ranking systems.[166] These board members contend that most raters and senior raters grade Marines along a bell curve with fewer ratings in the upper and lower ends of the curve.[167] Each Marine's Master Brief Sheet (MBS) displays the senior rater's profile so that the evaluated Marine can clearly see where the senior rater ranked them in comparison with other Marines.[168] The Marine Corps receives two points for using an eight point rating system that can aid in identifying the top, middle, and bottom performers.

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[162] Michael McCoy, COL USMC, interview by Author, *Commander, Marine Detachment FT Leavenworth,* (Dec 2, 2010).

[163] Department of the Navy, *Marine Corps Order P1610.7F W/CH 1*, 4-47.

[164] Ibid., 4-48. Additionally, see Appendix 2 under Reviewing Officer.

[165] Lindemann, 10.

[166] Berger et al., 30.

[167] Lindemann, 9.

[168] Department of the Navy, *Marine Corps Order P1610.7F W/CH 1*, G-3. The MBS is similar to the Army's Officer Records Brief but contains the numeric ratings of the rater and senior rater for each FITREP.

The Marine Corps policy explicitly directs a senior rater to make essay comments to "amplify" their markings for each Marine.[169] Additionally, the senior rater must comment if the rater recommends the Marine for advanced promotion.[170] Finally, the senior rater is subject to the same accountability measures in their personal evaluation as the rater. Therefore, the Marine Corps receives two points for requiring justification for markings and senior rater accountability.

The Marine Corps receives six out of six points in differentiating between Marines in the senior rater ratings. The Marine Corps uses defined behaviors at various levels of the rating scale similar to standards behavior scales found in the literature.[171] The Marine Corps using an eight point rating system that aids in identifying top, middle, and bottom performers as described in the literature.[172] Finally, the Marine Corps requires justification for ratings and senior rater's accountability. This relates to hypothesis three by identifying that the Marine Corps FITREP can identify three levels of performers without the use of forced distribution. However, the research found that it is possible that this is due to a combination of rater and senior rating quantitative assessments.[173]

An analysis of the Marine Corps FITREP found that it is a good system for evaluating performance and potential. First, the analysis found that the Marine Corps uses their current doctrinally defined competencies in their FITREP.[174] Second, the analysis found that the Marine Corps met all of the criteria for evaluating its competencies. Finally, the Marine Corps met all of the criteria for differentiating between Marines using the senior raters rating on potential, using narrative comments, and enforcing ratings standards and accountability. In summary, the research

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[169] Department of the Navy, *Marine Corps Order P1610.7F W/CH 1*, 4-48.

[170] Ibid.

[171] Milkovich and Boudreau, 170.

[172] Berger et al., 30.

[173] Lindemann, 9.

[174] Department of the Navy, *Marine Corps Order P1610.7F W/CH 1*, 4-22 through 4-41.

found that the Marine Corps met all of the criteria to rate Marine competencies and differentiate between Marines.

Cross Case Analysis

This section compares the results of the case studies and their implications to the three hypotheses. It begins by discussing the results of testing hypothesis one and whether each case rates their current competencies. Next, the section discusses the testing of hypothesis two and whether the case rates their competencies using behavior-anchored rating scales. Finally, the section discusses the testing of hypothesis three regarding how each case differentiates between employees. This will lead the monograph to some final recommendations and conclusion from the study.

The first hypothesis states that if the Army rates leader competencies, then it can align the OER with current leadership doctrine. The Army OER scored one out of four points while the Marine Corps FITREP received four out of four points in this criterion. The analysis found that the Army does not rate its current leadership competencies.[175] The analysis found that the Marine Corps FITREP defines and rates its competencies and that this can make it easier to identify desired behaviors and rate those behaviors.[176] The FITREP scored the best in this evaluation by aligning with doctrine and defining strong and weak behaviors. The literature and the case study analysis support the first hypothesis.[177] The Army can potentially improve its current OER by rating their current leader competencies.

The second hypothesis contends that if the Army uses Behavior-Anchored Rating Scales (BARS) to rate the LRM competencies with the OER, then it can provide improved feedback to officers regarding leader competencies. The Army OER scored two out of six points while the

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[175] Department of the Army, *FM 6-22*, 2-7.

[176] Milkovich and Boudreau, 174-175. Weaver, interview by Author, Dec 2, 2010.

[177] Horey et al., 39.

Marine Corps FITREP received six out of six points in this criterion. The Army does not use a rating scale to rate the competencies listed on the current OER. The Marine Corps uses a behavior-anchored rating scale to rate their competencies and describes strong and weak behaviors at various levels of performance.[178] Horn et al.'s research identified the benefits that behavior-anchored scales have in providing feedback to employees compared to numeric scales.[179] Additionally, the research found that the use of behavior-anchored ratings is prevalent in recent Army funded research.[180] This evidence supports the hypothesis that the Army can improve its OER and provide better feedback regarding officer performance by rating leader competencies using behavior-anchored rating scales.

The third hypothesis states that if the Army uses a forced distribution system, then it can clearly identify the top, middle, and bottom performers. The Army OER scored five out of six points while the Marine Corps FITREP received six out of six points in this criterion. The Army currently uses a partial forced distribution scale but does not use it to rate junior officers. The research found no evidence to indicate that the Army's method prevents it from differentiating officers into three tiers of performance. Brutus' research indicates that structured essay comments can evaluate performance in the absence of quantitative measures.[181] The Marine Corps performed the best using the evaluation criteria in differentiating. The Marine Corps does not use a forced distribution system, but evidence supports the notion that it can still break out officers into three tiers of performance.[182] Additionally, the Marine Corps uses an eight-point scale to break out its leaders. However, it is unclear how much the raters quantitative rating assists in this breakout.

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[178] See Appendix 2.

[179] Horn et al., 568.

[180] Borman et al., C2-C9. Phillips et al., 22-23.

[181] Brutus (2009), 1-14.

[182] Lindemann, 10. Berger et al., 30.

The evidence found that the Army perhaps does not have an issue with its current senior rater evaluation. The Marine Corps FITREP only outscored the Army due to it using a scale of eight points rather than three. If the Army desires to change its current senior rater system, it could add more rating levels and use the flexible forced distribution guidelines as described by Grote.[183] This consideration might be worthy of future research by the Army. This evidence supports the notion that the Army's current system is sufficiently able to identify the top, middle, and bottom performers but that there are potentially better methods available.

The cross case analysis found the Marine Corps FITREP was the best case in the analysis according to the evaluation criteria. The evidence presented supports the assertions in hypotheses one and two. The evidence found that the Army could already perform according to hypothesis three. However, other methods could provide for more levels of differentiation if the Army so desires.

Summary

The analysis of the two cases used the research's methodology to evaluate the cases, answer the research questions, and provide evidence to support the hypotheses. The first case analyzed the Army's OER. The Marine Corps FITREP System provided the second case. The cross case analysis related the case studies to the hypothesis in order to test their claim and support it with evidence. Next, the research concludes with some final recommendations.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Recommendations

This section provides the final recommendations from the research. It begins by answering the secondary research questions based on the evidence presented in the analysis. Next, it summarizes the answer to the primary research question. Finally, it recommends

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[183] Grote, 139-149.

additional areas of research that emerged from this study. These recommendations provide the foundation for a potential officer evaluation that would require future empirical analysis to determine their effectiveness.

The first research question asked why should the Army rate leader competencies. Schein asserted that it is a quick and easy way to change from one set of embedded skills to another.[184] The Army now defines its current leader competencies as 1) leads others, 2) extends influence beyond the chain of command, 3) leads by example, 4) communicates, 5) creates positive environment, 6) prepares self, 7) develops others, and 8) gets results.[185] Horey et al. validated the use of these competencies in performance assessments. Finally, the case study analysis showed that the Marine Corps uses its leader competencies in its performance evaluations. Although use is not proof of effectiveness, the evidence suggests that the Army is out of step with theory, research, and common practice. Therefore, this study recommends that the Army incorporate its current leader competencies into the next OER.

The second research questioned asked how the Army could more effectively rate its competencies. Grussing et al. and Horn et al. suggest that in superior to subordinate ratings, behavioral-anchored rating scales provide more effective feedback than standard rating scales. Moro and Motowidlo suggest including rater accountability in the rating process.[186] Additionally, Brutus and others encourage narrative comments to expand on ratings. The Army's current evaluation rated poorly in accomplishing these tasks. The case study found that the Marine Corps generally follows these recommendations. Therefore, the Army should rate their leader competencies using a behavior-anchored rating scale to provide better feedback to the ratee. The Army should also include accountability measures to hold raters accountable for high ratings and for the rater's role in the evaluation process.

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[184] Schein, 127.

[185] Department of the Army, *FM 6-22*, 2-4.

[186] Mero et al., 518.

The third question asked how the Army could better differentiate the top, middle, and bottom performers. The research found that this might not be a significant issue in the Army. This does not mean that there are different, and potentially better, methods to differentiate top performers. One weakness of the current Army system is that it recommends three levels of distinction and does not prevent the rater from using only two levels. Berger et al. suggests that this can lead to raters using only the higher ratings.[187] It is unclear, from the research, how the current lack of a block check in junior officer reports will affect future selection boards. Brutus asserts that structured essay comments can sufficiently address necessary aspects of performance in the absence of quantified ratings.[188] The Marine Corps senior raters do not use a forced distribution but they also have comparative ratings from the rater's perspective. It is unclear if this process would provide additional benefit to the Army. Therefore, the Army, at a minimum, should maintain the current senior rater block check. Additionally, the Army could benefit from training all raters as to the structure of their ratings and comments.[189]

The primary research questioned asked how the Army could improve its OER in order to evaluate current doctrinal competencies and better differentiate its top, middle, and bottom performers. The research found sufficient evidence to support the original assertion. The Army can improve its Officer Evaluation Report by incorporating the leader competencies of the Army's Leadership Requirements Model, use behavior-anchored rating scales to rate performance, and a senior rater forced distribution system in order to evaluate leader competencies and differentiate between officer's performance and potential. The Army can benefit from additional research in the areas below that might make a future OER even better.

This research identified four areas of research that might benefit the Army. First, the Army should study relative value scores for behavior-anchored rating scales and their effect on

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[187] Berger et al., 30-31.

[188] Brutus (2009), 1-14.

[189] Human Resources Command Evaluaiton Branch, 21-24.

rating accuracy. Second, additional research into an automated OER, like the FITREP, that can easily capture quantitative data from the various rankings and incorporate software to analyze the narrative for compliance to Army regulation. This system could also monitor initial, periodic, and other developmental counseling conducted online. Third, research how the FITREP and a similar Army OER could reduce workloads and increase efficiency in selection boards and other administrative functions will help tailor the new OER to maximize its potential as an administrative tool. Finally, research in establishing frame of reference training can facilitate shared understanding into the requirements of the new OER.[190]

Conclusion

The research began by introducing the reader to the issue and the context surrounding the current discourse regarding the development of a new OER. The literature review introduced the evaluation theory, and key concepts that influenced the study. The methodology section explained the process used to evaluate the case studies. The case studies evaluated current practices in order to identify best practices. Finally, the research concluded with answering the primary research question and supporting the thesis through evidence established in the research.

This research indicates that the Army may be able to improve its OER by implementing these recommendations. Future study will further validate these concepts and should yield an evaluation that can benefit both the rated officer and personnel decision makers. If recent history is an indicator, the next OER will last for ten or more years. It is imperative that the Army get it right on this turn if it wishes to identify and retain those officers who best exhibit the Army's core leader competencies.

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[190] Joel T. Lundstrum, A New Use of Frame-of-Reference Training: Improving Reviewers' Inferences From Biodata Information (Manhattan, KS: Mansas State University, 2007).

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Appendix 1 The Army Officer Evaluation Report

OFFICER EVALUATION REPORT
For use of this form, see AR 623-3; the proponent agency is DCS, G-1.

PART I - ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

a. NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial)		b. SSN	c. RANK	d. DATE OF RANK	e. BRANCH	f. DESIGNATED / PMOS (W0) SPECIALTIES

g. 1. UNIT, ORG., STATION, ZIP CODE OR APO, MAJOR COMMAND | g.2. STATUS CODE | h. REASON FOR SUBMISSION

i. PERIOD COVERED		j. RATED MONTHS	k. NONRATED CODES	l. NO. OF ENCL	m. RATED OFFICER'S AKO EMAIL ADDRESS (.gov or mil)	n. UIC	o. CMD CODE	p. PSB CODE
FROM (YYYYMMDD)	THRU (YYYYMMDD)							

PART II - AUTHENTICATION (Rated officer's signature verifies officer has seen completed OER Parts I-VII and the admin data is correct)

a. NAME OF RATER (Last, First, MI)	SSN	RANK	POSITION	SIGNATURE	DATE (YYYYMMDD)
b. NAME OF INTERMEDIATE RATER (Last, First, MI)	SSN	RANK	POSITION	SIGNATURE	DATE (YYYYMMDD)
c. NAME OF SENIOR RATER (Last, First, MI)	SSN	RANK	POSITION	SIGNATURE	DATE (YYYYMMDD)

SENIOR RATER'S ORGANIZATION	BRANCH	SENIOR RATER TELEPHONE NUMBER	E-MAIL ADDRESS (.gov or .mil)

d. This is a referred report, do you wish to make comments? ☐ ☐ Yes, comments are attached ☐ No | e. SIGNATURE OF RATED OFFICER | DATE (YYYYMMDD)

PART III - DUTY DESCRIPTION

a. PRINCIPAL DUTY TITLE	b. POSITION AOC/BR

c. SIGNIFICANT DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. REFER TO PART IVa, DA FORM 67-9-1.

PART IV - PERFORMANCE EVALUATION - PROFESSIONALISM (Rater)

CHARACTER Disposition of the leader: combination of values, attributes, and skills affecting leader actions

a. ARMY VALUES (Comments mandatory for all "NO" entries. Use PART Vb.)

	Yes	No			Yes	No
1. HONOR: Adherence to the Army's publicly declared code of values				5. RESPECT: Promotes dignity, consideration, fairness, & EO		
2. INTEGRITY: Possesses high personal moral standards; honest in word and deed				6. SELFLESS-SERVICE: Places Army priorities before self		
3. COURAGE: Manifests physical and moral bravery				7. DUTY: Fulfills professional, legal, and moral obligations		
4. LOYALTY: Bears true faith and allegiance to the U.S. Constitution, the Army, the unit, and the soldier						

b. LEADER ATTRIBUTES / SKILLS / ACTIONS: First, mark "YES" or "NO" for each block. Second, choose a total of six that best describe the rated officer. Select one from ATTRIBUTES, two from SKILLS (Competence), and three from ACTIONS (LEADERSHIP). Place an "X" in the appropriate numbered box with optional comments in PART Vb. Comments are mandatory in Part Vb for all "No" entries.

b.1. ATTRIBUTES (Select 1) Fundamental qualities and characteristics

1. MENTAL YES NO	2. PHYSICAL YES NO	3. EMOTIONAL YES NO
Possesses desire, will, initiative, and discipline	Maintains appropriate level of physical fitness and military bearing	Displays self-control; calm under pressure

b.2 SKILLS (Competence) (Select 2) Skill development is part of self-development; prerequisite to action

1. CONCEPTUAL YES NO	2. INTERPERSONAL YES NO	3. TECHNICAL YES NO
Demonstrates sound judgment, critical/creative thinking, moral reasoning	Shows skill with people: coaching, teaching, counseling, motivating and empowering	Possesses the necessary expertise to accomplish all tasks and functions

4. TACTICAL Demonstrates proficiency in required professional knowledge, judgment, and warfighting YES NO

b.3. ACTIONS (LEADERSHIP) (Select 3) Major activities leaders perform: influencing, operating, and improving

INFLUENCING Method of reaching goals while operating / improving	1. COMMUNICATING YES NO Displays good oral, written, and listening skills for individuals / groups	2. DECISION-MAKING YES NO Employs sound judgment, logical reasoning and uses resources wisely	3. MOTIVATING YES NO Inspires, motivates, and guides others toward mission accomplishment
OPERATING Short-term mission accomplishment	4. PLANNING YES NO Develops detailed, executable plans that are feasible, acceptable, and suitable	5. EXECUTING YES NO Shows tactical proficiency, meets mission standards, and takes care of people/resources	6. ASSESSING YES NO Uses after-action and evaluation tools to facilitate consistent improvement
IMPROVING Long-term improvement in the Army, its people and organizations	7. DEVELOPING YES NO Invests adequate time and effort to develop individual subordinates as leaders	8. BUILDING YES NO Spends time and resources improving teams, groups and units; fosters ethical climate	9. LEARNING YES NO Seeks self-improvement and organizational growth; envisioning, adapting and leading change

c. APFT: | DATE: | HEIGHT: | WEIGHT:

d. OFFICER DEVELOPMENT - MANDATORY YES OR NO ENTRY FOR RATERS OF CPTs, LTs, CW2s, AND WO1s.   YES NO NA
WERE DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS RECORDED ON DA FORM 67-9-1a AND QUARTERLY FOLLOW-UP COUNSELINGS CONDUCTED?

DA FORM 67-9, MAR 2006 | PREVIOUS EDITIONS ARE OBSOLETE. | Page 1 of 2
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NAME	SSN	PERIOD COVERED	–	—

PART V - PERFORMANCE AND POTENTIAL EVALUATION *(Rater)*

a. EVALUATE THE RATED OFFICER'S PERFORMANCE DURING THE RATING PERIOD AND HIS/HER POTENTIAL FOR PROMOTION

☐ OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE, MUST PROMOTE ☐ SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE, PROMOTE ☐ UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE, DO NOT PROMOTE ☐ OTHER *(Explain)*

b. COMMENT ON SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PERFORMANCE, REFER TO PART III, DA FORM 67-9 AND PART IVa, b, AND PART Vb, DA FORM 67-9-1.

c. COMMENT ON POTENTIAL FOR PROMOTION.

d. IDENTIFY ANY UNIQUE PROFESSIONAL SKILLS OR AREAS OF EXPERTISE OF VALUE TO THE ARMY THAT THIS OFFICER POSSESSES. FOR ARMY COMPETITIVE CATEGORY CPT ALSO INDICATE A POTENTIAL CAREER FIELD FOR FUTURE SERVICE.

PART VI - INTERMEDIATE RATER

PART VII - SENIOR RATER

a. EVALUATE THE RATED OFFICER'S PROMOTION POTENTIAL TO THE NEXT HIGHER GRADE

I currently senior rate _____ officer(s) in this grade
A completed DA Form 67-9-1 was received with this report and considered in my evaluation and review ☐ YES ☐ NO *(Explain in c)*

☐ BEST QUALIFIED ☐ FULLY QUALIFIED ☐ DO NOT PROMOTE ☐ OTHER *(Explain below))*

b. POTENTIAL COMPARED WITH OFFICERS SENIOR RATED IN SAME GRADE (OVERPRINTED BY DA)

☐ ABOVE CENTER OF MASS
(Less than 50% in top box; Center of Mass if 50% or more in top box)

☐ CENTER OF MASS

☐ BELOW CENTER OF MASS RETAIN

☐ BELOW CENTER OF MASS DO NOT RETAIN

c. COMMENT ON PERFORMANCE/POTENTIAL

d. LIST THREE FUTURE ASSIGNMENTS FOR WHICH THIS OFFICER IS BEST SUITED.
FOR ARMY COMPETITIVE CATEGORY CPT, ALSO INDICATE A POTENTIAL CAREER FIELD FOR FUTURE SERVICE.

DA FORM 67-9, MAR 2006

Appendix 2 The Marine Corps Fitness Report

USMC FITNESS REPORT (1610) NAVMC 10835A (Rev. 1-01) (WN 3.0) PREVIOUS EDITIONS WILL NOT BE USED	*DRAFT COPY* **COMMANDANT'S GUIDANCE**	**DO NOT STAPLE** **THIS FORM**

The completed fitness report is the most important information component in manpower management. It is the primary means of evaluating a Marine's performance and is the Commandant's primary tool for the selection of personnel for promotion, augmentation, resident schooling, command, and duty assignments. Therefore, the completion of this report is one of an officer's most critical responsibilities. Inherent in this duty is the commitment of each Reporting Senior and Reviewing Officer to ensure the integrity of the system by giving close attention to accurate marking and timely reporting. Every officer serves a role in the scrupulous maintenance of this evaluation system, ultimately important to both the individual and the Marine Corps. Inflationary markings only serve to dilute the actual value of each report. Reviewing Officers will not concur with inflated reports.

A. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

1. Marine Reported On:

a. Last Name	b. First Name	c. MI	d. SSN	e. Grade	f. DOR	g. PMOS	h. BILMOS

2. Organization:

a. MCC	b. RUC	c. Unit Description

3. Occasion and Period Covered:

a. OCC	b. From	To	c. Type	**4. Duty Assignment (descriptive title):**

5. Special Case:

a. Adverse	b. Not Observed	c. Extended
☐	☐	☐

6. Marine Subject Of:

a. Commendatory Material	b. Derogatory Material	c. Disciplinary Action
☐	☐	☐

7. Recommended For Promotion:

a. Yes	b. No	c. N/A
☐	☐	☐

8. Special Information:

a. QUAL		d. HT(in.)		g. Reserve Component	
b. PFT		e. WT		h. Future Use	
c. Status		f. Body Fat		i. Future Use	

9. Duty Preference:
a. Code b. Descriptive Title

1st	
2nd	
3rd	

10. Reporting Senior:

a. Last Name	b. Init	c. Service	d. SSN	e. Grade	f. Duty Assignment

11. Reviewing Officer:

a. Last Name	b. Init	c. Service	d. SSN	e. Grade	f. Duty Assignment

B. BILLET DESCRIPTION

C. BILLET ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Marine Reported On: a. Last Name		b. First Name	c. MI	d. SSN	2. Occasion and Period Covered: a. OCC	b. From	To

D. MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENT

1. PERFORMANCE. Results achieved during the reporting period. How well those duties inherent to a Marine's billet, plus all additional duties, formally and informally assigned, were carried out. Reflects a Marine's aptitude, competence, and commitment to the unit's success above personal reward. Indicators are time and resource management, task prioritization, and tenacity to achieve positive ends consistently.

ADV	Meets requirements of billet and additional duties. Aptitude, commitment, and competence meet expectations. Results maintain status quo.		Consistently produces quality results while measurably improving unit performance. Habitually makes effective use of time and resources; improves billet procedures and products. Positive impact extends beyond billet expectations.		Results far surpass expectations. Recognizes and exploits new resources; creates opportunities. Emulated; sought after as an expert with influence beyond unit. Impact significant; innovative approaches to problems produce significant gains in quality and efficiency.		N/O

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. PROFICIENCY. Demonstrates technical knowledge and practical skill in the execution of the Marine's overall duties. Combines training, education and experience. Translates skills into actions which contribute to accomplishing tasks and missions. Imparts knowledge to others. Grade dependent.

ADV	Competent. Possesses the requisite range of skills and knowledge commensurate with grade and experience. Understands and articulates basic functions related to mission accomplishment.		Demonstrates mastery of all required skills. Expertise, education and experience consistently enhance mission accomplishment. Innovative troubleshooter and problem solver. Effectively imparts skills to subordinates.		True expert in field. Knowledge and skills impact far beyond those of peers. Translates broad-based education and experience into forward thinking, innovative actions. Makes immeasurable impact on mission accomplishment. Peerless teacher, selflessly imparts expertise to subordinates, peers, and seniors.		N/O

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

JUSTIFICATION:

E. INDIVIDUAL CHARACTER

1. COURAGE. Moral or physical strength to overcome danger, fear, difficulty or anxiety. Personal acceptance of responsibility and accountability, placing conscience over competing interests regardless of consequences. Conscious, overriding decision to risk bodily harm or death to accomplish the mission or save others. The will to persevere despite uncertainty.

ADV	Demonstrates inner strength and acceptance of responsibility commensurate with scope of duties and experience. Willing to face moral or physical challenges in pursuit of mission accomplishment.		Guided by conscience in all actions. Proven ability to overcome danger, fear, difficulty or anxiety. Exhibits bravery in the face of adversity and uncertainty. Not deterred by morally difficult situations or hazardous responsibilities.		Uncommon bravery and capacity to overcome obstacles and inspire others in the face of moral dilemma or life-threatening danger. Demonstrated under the most adverse conditions. Selfless. Always places conscience over competing interests regardless of physical or personal consequences.		N/O

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. EFFECTIVENESS UNDER STRESS. Thinking, functioning and leading effectively under conditions of physical and/or mental pressure. Maintaining composure appropriate for the situation, while displaying steady purpose of action, enabling one to inspire others while continuing to lead under adverse conditions. Physical and emotional strength, resilience and endurance are elements.

ADV	Exhibits discipline and stability under pressure. Judgment and effective problem-solving skills are evident.		Consistently demonstrates maturity, mental agility and willpower during periods of adversity. Provides order to chaos through the application of intuition, problem-solving skills, and leadership. Composure reassures others.		Demonstrates seldom-matched presence of mind under the most demanding circumstances. Stabilizes any situation through the resolute and timely application of direction, focus and personal presence.		N/O

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. INITIATIVE. Action in the absence of specific direction. Seeing what needs to be done and acting without prompting. The instinct to begin a task and follow through energetically on one's own accord. Being creative, proactive and decisive. Transforming opportunity into action.

ADV	Demonstrates willingness to take action in the absence of specific direction. Acts commensurate with grade, training and experience.		Self-motivated and action-oriented. Foresight and energy consistently transform opportunity into action. Develops and pursues creative, innovative solutions. Acts without prompting. Self-starter.		Highly motivated and proactive. Displays exceptional awareness of surroundings and environment. Uncanny ability to anticipate mission requirements and quickly formulate original, far-reaching solutions. Always takes decisive, effective action.		N/O

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

JUSTIFICATION:

NAVMC 10835B (Rev. 1-01) (WN 3.0)

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1. Marine Reported On:		*DRAFT COPY*			2. Occasion and Period Covered:		
a. Last Name		b. First Name	c. MI	d. SSN	a. OCC	b. From	To

F. LEADERSHIP

1. LEADING SUBORDINATES. The inseparable relationship between leader and led. The application of leadership principles to provide direction and motivate subordinates. Using authority, persuasion and personality to influence subordinates to accomplish assigned tasks. Sustaining motivation and morale while maximizing subordinates' performance.

ADV	Engaged; provides instructions and directs execution. Seeks to accomplish mission in ways that sustain motivation and morale. Actions contribute to unit effectiveness.	Achieves a highly effective balance between direction and delegation. Effectively tasks subordinates and clearly delineates standards expected. Enhances performance through constructive supervision. Fosters motivation and enhances morale. Builds and sustains teams that successfully meet mission requirements. Encourages initiative and candor among subordinates.	Promotes creativity and energy among subordinates by striking the ideal balance of direction and delegation. Achieves highest levels of performance from subordinates by encouraging individual initiative. Engenders willing subordination, loyalty, and trust that allow subordinates to overcome their perceived limitations. Personal leadership fosters highest levels of motivation and morale, ensuring mission accomplishment even in the most difficult circumstances.	N/O

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. DEVELOPING SUBORDINATES. Commitment to train, educate, and challenge all Marines regardless of race, religion, ethnic background, or gender. Mentorship. Cultivating professional and personal development of subordinates. Developing team players and esprit de corps. Ability to combine teaching and coaching. Creating an atmosphere tolerant of mistakes in the course of learning.

ADV	Maintains an environment that allows personal and professional development. Ensures subordinates participate in all mandated development programs.	Develops and institutes innovative programs, to include PME, that emphasize personal and professional development of subordinates. Challenges subordinates to exceed their perceived potential thereby enhancing unit morale and effectiveness. Creates an environment where all Marines are confident to learn through trial and error. As a mentor, prepares subordinates for increased responsibilities and duties.	Widely recognized and emulated as a teacher, coach and leader. Any Marine would desire to serve with this Marine because they know they will grow personally and professionally. Subordinate and unit performance far surpassed expected results due to MRO's mentorship and team building talents. Attitude toward subordinate development is infectious, extending beyond the unit.	N/O

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. SETTING THE EXAMPLE. The most visible facet of leadership: how well a Marine serves as a role model for all others. Personal action demonstrates the highest standards of conduct, ethical behavior, fitness, and appearance. Bearing, demeanor, and self-discipline are elements.

ADV	Maintains Marine Corps standards for appearance, weight, and uniform wear. Sustains required level of physical fitness. Adheres to the tenets of the Marine Corps core values.	Personal conduct on and off duty reflects highest Marine Corps standards of integrity, bearing and appearance. Character is exceptional. Actively seeks self-improvement in wide-ranging areas. Dedication to duty and professional example encourage others' self-improvement efforts.	Model Marine, frequently emulated. Exemplary conduct, behavior, and actions are tone-setting. An inspiration to subordinates, peers, and seniors. Remarkable dedication to improving self and others.	N/O

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. ENSURING WELL-BEING OF SUBORDINATES. Genuine interest in the well-being of Marines. Efforts enhance subordinates' ability to concentrate/focus on unit mission accomplishment. Concern for family readiness is inherent. The importance placed on welfare of subordinates is based on the belief that Marines take care of their own.

ADV	Deals confidently with issues pertinent to subordinate welfare and recognizes suitable courses of action that support subordinates' well-being. Applies available resources, allowing subordinates to effectively concentrate on the mission.	Instills and/or reinforces a sense of responsibility among junior Marines for themselves and their subordinates. Actively fosters the development of and uses support systems for subordinates which improve their ability to contribute to unit mission accomplishment. Efforts to enhance subordinate welfare improve the unit's ability to accomplish its mission.	Noticeably enhances subordinates well-being, resulting in a measurable increase in unit effectiveness. Maximizes unit and base resources to provide subordinates with the best support available. Proactive approach serves to energize unit members to "take care of their own," thereby correcting potential problems before they can hinder subordinates' effectiveness. Widely recognized for techniques and policies that produce results and build morale. Builds strong family atmosphere. Puts motto *Mission first, Marines always*, into action.	N/O

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. COMMUNICATION SKILLS. The efficient transmission and receipt of thoughts and ideas that enable and enhance leadership. Equal importance given to listening, speaking, writing, and critical reading skills. Interactive, allowing one to perceive problems and situations, provide concise guidance, and express complex ideas in a form easily understood by everyone. Allows subordinates to ask questions, raise issues and concerns and venture opinions. Contributes to a leader's ability to motivate as well as counsel.

ADV	Skilled in receiving and conveying information. Communicates effectively in performance of duties.	Clearly articulates thoughts and ideas, verbally and in writing. Communication in all forms is accurate, intelligent, concise, and timely. Communicates with clarity and verve, ensuring understanding of intent or purpose. Encourages and considers the contributions of others.	Highly developed facility in verbal communication. Adept in composing written documents of the highest quality. Combines presence and verbal skills which engender confidence and achieve understanding irrespective of the setting, situation, or size of the group addressed. Displays an intuitive sense of when and how to listen.	N/O

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

JUSTIFICATION:

NAVMC 10835C (Rev. 1-01) (WN 3.0)

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1. Marine Reported On:					2. Occasion and Period Covered:		
a. Last Name	b. First Name	c. MI	d. SSN		a. OCC	b. From	To

G. INTELLECT AND WISDOM

1.PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION (PME). Commitment to intellectual growth in ways beneficial to the Marine Corps. Increases the breadth and depth of warfighting and leadership aptitude. Resources include resident schools; professional qualifications and certification processes; nonresident and other extension courses; civilian educational institution coursework; a personal reading program that includes (but is not limited to) selections from the Commandant's Reading List; participation in discussion groups and military societies; and involvement in learning through new technologies.

ADV	Maintains currency in required military skills and related developments. Has completed or is enrolled in appropriate level of PME for grade and level of experience. Recognizes and understands new and creative approaches to service issues. Remains abreast of contemporary concepts and issues.	PME outlook extends beyond MOS and required education. Develops and follows a comprehensive personal program which includes broadened professional reading and/or academic course work; advances new concepts and ideas.	Dedicated to life-long learning. As a result of active and continuous efforts, widely recognized as an intellectual leader in professionally related topics. Makes time for study and takes advantage of all resources and programs. Introduces new and creative approaches to services issues. Engages in a broad spectrum of forums and dialogues.	N/O

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. DECISION MAKING ABILITY. Viable and timely problem solution. Contributing elements are judgment and decisiveness. Decisions reflect the balance between an optimal solution and a satisfactory, workable solution that generates tempo. Decisions are made within the context of the commander's established intent and the goal of mission accomplishment. Anticipation, mental agility, intuition, and success are inherent.

ADV	Makes sound decisions leading to mission accomplishment. Actively collects and evaluates information and weighs alternatives to achieve timely results. Confidently approaches problems; accepts responsibility for outcomes.	Demonstrates mental agility; effectively prioritizes and solves multiple complex problems. Analytical abilities enhanced by experience, education, and intuition. Anticipates problems and implements viable, long-term solutions. Steadfast, willing to make difficult decisions.	Widely recognized and sought after to resolve the most critical, complex problems. Seldom matched analytical and intuitive abilities; accurately foresees unexpected problems and arrives at well-timed decisions despite fog and friction. Completely confident approach to all problems. Masterfully strikes a balance between the desire for perfect knowledge and greater tempo.	N/O

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. JUDGMENT. The discretionary aspect of decision making. Draws on core values, knowledge, and personal experience to make wise choices. Comprehends the consequences of contemplated courses of action.

ADV	Majority of judgments are measured, circumspect, relevant and correct.	Decisions are consistent and uniformly correct, tempered by consideration of their consequences. Able to identify, isolate and assess relevant factors in the decision making process. Opinions sought by others. Subordinates personal interest in favor of impartiality.	Decisions reflect exceptional insight and wisdom beyond this Marine's experience. Counsel sought by all; often an arbiter. Consistent, superior judgment inspires the confidence of seniors.	N/O

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

JUSTIFICATION:

H. FULFILLMENT OF EVALUATION RESPONSIBILITIES

1. EVALUATIONS. The extent to which this officer serving as a reporting official conducted, or required others to conduct, accurate, uninflated, and timely evaluations.

ADV	Occasionally submitted untimely or administratively incorrect evaluations. As RS, submitted one or more reports that contained inflated markings. As RO, concurred with one or more reports from subordinates that were returned by HQMC for inflated marking.	Prepared uninflated evaluations which were consistently submitted on time. Evaluations accurately described performance and character. Evaluations contained no inflated markings. No reports returned by RO or HQMC for inflated marking. No subordinates' reports returned by HQMC for inflated marking. Few, if any, reports were returned by RO or HQMC for administrative errors. Section Cs were void of superlatives. Justifications were specific, verifiable, substantive, and where possible, quantifiable and supported the markings given.	No reports submitted late. No reports returned by either RO or HQMC for administrative correction or inflated markings. No subordinates' reports returned by HQMC for administrative correction or inflated markings. Returned procedurally or administratively incorrect reports to subordinates for correction. As RO nonconcurred with all inflated reports.	N/O

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

JUSTIFICATION:

1. Marine Reported On: a. Last Name		b. First Name	c. MI	d. SSN	2. Occasion and Period Covered: a. OCC	b. From	To
DRAFT COPY							

I. DIRECTED AND ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

J. CERTIFICATION

1. I CERTIFY that to the best of my knowledge and belief all entries made hereon are true and without prejudice or partiality and that I have provided a signed copy of this report to the Marine Reported on.

_____
(Signature of Reporting Senior)

☐☐☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐
(Date in YYYYMMDD format)

2. I ACKNOWLEDGE the adverse nature of this report and

☐ I have no statement to make

☐ I have attached a statement

_____
(Signature of Marine Reported On)

☐☐☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐
(Date in YYYYMMDD format)

K. REVIEWING OFFICER COMMENTS

1. OBSERVATION: ☐ Sufficient ☐ Insufficient   2. EVALUATION: ☐ Concur ☐ Do Not Concur

3. COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT:
Provide a comparative assessment of potential by placing an "X" in the appropriate box. In marking the comparison, consider all Marines of this grade whose professional abilities are known to you personally.

DESCRIPTION		COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT
THE EMINENTLY QUALIFIED MARINE	☐	
ONE OF THE FEW EXCEPTIONALLY QUALIFIED MARINES	☐	
ONE OF THE MANY HIGHLY QUALIFIED PROFESSIONALS WHO FORM THE MAJORITY OF THIS GRADE	☐ ☐ ☐	
A QUALIFIED MARINE	☐	
UNSATISFACTORY	☐	

4. REVIEWING OFFICER COMMENTS: Amplify your comparative assessment mark; evaluate potential for continued professional development to include: promotion, command, assignment, resident PME, and retention; and put Reporting Senior marks and comments in perspective.

5. I CERTIFY that to the best of my knowledge and belief all entries made hereon are true and without prejudice or partiality.

_____
(Signature of Reviewing Officer)

☐☐☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐
(Date in YYYYMMDD format)

6. I ACKNOWLEDGE the adverse nature of this report and

☐ I have no statement to make

☐ I have attached a statement

_____
(Signature of Marine Reported On)

☐☐☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐
(Date in YYYYMMDD format)

L. ADDENDUM PAGE

ADDENDUM PAGE ATTACHED: ☐ YES

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